

7 receiving said data on an input of a second flip-flop
8 connected to said combinational logic, said step of receiving being
9 controlled by said first clock signal; and

10 transmitting said data through an output of said second flip-
11 flop, said step of transmitting being controlled by a second clock
12 signal, said first and second clock signals having the same
13 frequency and substantially the same phase, wherein the arrival
14 times of said first and second clock signals at said second flip-
15 flop are [at least slightly] skewed.

REMARKS

The claims presently pending are Claims 1-14. Claims 1, 7 and 12 have been amended. These changes are respectfully submitted to not introduce new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Figures 1-4 have been amended to include the legend --Prior Art-- as requested by the Examiner.

Claims 1-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In response, Applicant has amended Claim 1 to more particularly point out the subject matter that is sought to be claimed by making it clear that the input receives both "first data

and second data, said first data being received and stored within said flip-flop circuit prior to said input receiving said second data, said first data being isolated from said second data." In addition, Claim 1 has been amended to make it clear that the output transmits "said first data after said input receives said second data."

Furthermore, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 7 and 12 to delete the limitation "at least slightly" before the word "skewed," as requested by the Examiner. Applicant notes that in the context of Claims 1, 7 and 12, it is the arrival times of the first and second clock signals that are skewed, not the phases, as indicated by the Examiner. Therefore, there is no ambiguity between the fact that the first and second clock signals have substantially the same phase and the fact that the arrival times of the first and second clock signals are skewed. Finally, Applicant points out that there is support for the phrase "substantially the same phase," which is recited in Claims 1, 7 and 12, in the specification on page 16, line 20 - page 17, line 2. Furthermore, Applicant submits that one skilled in the art would have knowledge of what is meant by the phrase "substantially the same phase." In addition, Applicant refers the Examiner to MPEP 2173.05(b), where the term "substantially" is discussed. Applicant notes that MPEP 2173.05(b) cites several cases that have held the term "substantially" to be

definite in claims. *See Andrew Corp. v. Gabriel Electronics*, 847 F.2d 819, 6 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

Claims 1-2, 7-8 and 12-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hanawa et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,745,302).

Applicant did not amend the claims to overcome the Hanawa et al. reference. As was originally claimed in independent Claims 1, 7 and 12, the arrival times of the first and second clock signals are skewed. There is no disclosure or suggestion in Hanawa et al. for the clock signals to be skewed in arrival time. Instead, in Hanawa et al. the clock signals are shifted in phase (see col. 2, lines 56-58 and Fig. 2). By contrast, as claimed in Claims 1, 7 and 12, the first and second clock signals have substantially the same phase.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no disclosure or suggestion in Hanawa et al. of either: (1) "said first and second clock signals having the same frequency and substantially the same phase" or (2) "the arrival times of said first and second clock signals at said flip-flop are skewed," as claimed in Claims 1, 7 and 12. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1, 7 and 12 are patentable over the art of record. In addition, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 2, 8 and 13 are patentable over the art of record for the reasons recited above with respect to Claims 1, 7 and 12.

Claims 3-6, 9-11 and 14 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 3-6, 9-11 and 14 are patentable over the art of record for this reason and the reasons recited above with respect to Claims 1, 7 and 12.

Thus, all grounds of rejection and/or objection are traversed or accommodated, and favorable reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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